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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/706,387	11/12/2003	Samuel M. Lester	10015833-1	6369
22879	7590	11/03/2005	EXAMINER	
HEWLETT PACKARD COMPANY P O BOX 272400, 3404 E. HARMONY ROAD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION FORT COLLINS, CO 80527-2400				GOLDBERG, BRIAN J
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
		2861		

DATE MAILED: 11/03/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/706,387	LESTER ET AL.
	Examiner Brian Goldberg	Art Unit 2861

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 September 2005.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 13-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-12,22 and 26-28 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 23-25 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 12 November 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11/12/2003</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election without traverse of Group 1 consisting of claims 1-12 and 22-28 in the reply filed on 9/26/2005 is acknowledged.

Claims 13-21 and 29 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on 9/26/2005.

Claim Objections

1. Claim 8 is objected to because of the following informalities: the fourth line of the claim states "a print media path configured to *transfer of* print media from the first," which makes it an improper sentence. Appropriate correction is required.
2. Claim 12 is objected to because of the following informalities: the last line of the claim states "without user invention" instead of "without user *intervention*". For the purpose of this examination, the change was taken into consideration. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-5 and 8-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Isobe et al.

5. Regarding claim 1, Isobe et al. disclose "a modular printing system comprising: a first printer (20, 404 of Fig 21) having a first printer media path; a second printer (405, 50 of Fig 21) having a second printer media path; a connector system (443 and 453 of Fig 22) adapted to interchangeably couple the first printer to the second printer, and align the first media path with the second media path to allow print media to pass between the first printer and second printer (col 2 ln 11-35)."

6. Regarding claim 2, Isobe et al. disclose "a first printer housing (440 of Fig 22); a second printer housing (450 of Fig 22), wherein the connector system (443 and 453 of Fig 22) is integrated into the first printer housing and the second printer housing."

7. Regarding claim 3, Isobe et al. disclose "the connector system aligns a print media path between the first printer and the second printer to allow print media to pass from the first printer to the second printer without user intervention (col 2 ln 11-35)."

8. Regarding claim 4, Isobe et al. disclose "the connector system comprises a first connector cell integrated into a side of the first printer (443 of Fig 22) and a second connector cell integrated into a side of the second printer (453 of Fig 22), the first and second connector cells adapted to connect the first printer to the second printer by connecting the first connector cell to the second connector cell (col 30 ln 10-12)."

9. Regarding claim 5, Isobe et al. disclose "the first connector cell is a male connector (443 of Fig 22 and col 30 ln 10) and the second connector cell is a female connector (453 of Fig 22 and col 30 ln 10)."

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10. Regarding claim 8, Isobe et al. disclose "A printing system, comprising: a first printer (404, 20 of Fig 21); a second printer (405, 50 of Fig 21); and a print media path configured to transfer of print media from the first printer to the second printer without user intervention (col 2 ln 11-35)."

11. Regarding claim 9, Isobe et al. disclose "the print media path comprises a plurality of print media inputs (input 283 and the input with rollers 34 and 35 of Fig 17)."

12. Regarding claim 10, Isobe et al. disclose "the print media path comprises a plurality of print media outputs (45 of Fig 17 and the output, not pictured, that leads to the input with rollers 34 and 35, also represented near rollers 75 and 76 of Fig 16)."

13. Regarding claim 11, Isobe et al. disclose "the first printer and the second printer each include a print media input and a print media output (input 283 of the first printer and the input with rollers 34 and 35 of Fig 17 of the second printer, 45 of Fig 17 of the first printer and the output, not pictured, that leads to the input with rollers 34 and 35, also represented near rollers 75 and 76 of Fig 16 of the second printer)."

14. Regarding claim 12, Isobe et al. disclose "the print media output of the first printer is adapted to provide print media to the print media input of the second printer without user invention (output of the first printer, not pictured, leads to the input with rollers 34 and 35 of the second printer in Fig 17)."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

15. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

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invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

16. Claims 22 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. Isobe et al. disclose "providing a first printer (20, 404 of Fig 21); providing a second printer (405, 50 of Fig 21); connecting the first printer to the second printer to provide a communication link between the first and the second printers and to provide a print media path between the first and second printers (443 and 453 of Fig 22 and col 2 ln 11-35)...wherein the first printer is one of an input module (63 of Fig 17), printer (202 of Fig 17), and finishing module (201 of Fig 17 or 280 of Fig 16)." Thus Isobe et al. meet the claimed invention except "determining through the communication link which one of the first and second printers will be a master printer; and designating the first and second printers as one of the master and a slave based upon the determination."

17. Murahashi et al. teach "determining through the communication link which one of the first and second printers will be a master printer (col 4 ln 34-38 and ln 43-45); and designating the first and second printers as one of the master and a slave based upon the determination (col 2 ln 30-35 and col 4 ln 40-45)." It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to determine and designate one of the linked printers a master and the other printer a slave. One would have been motivated to so modify Isobe et al. for the benefit of simplifying the connection, the synchronization, and the control of multiple recording apparatuses as stated by Murahashi et al. in column 2, lines 3-5.

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18. Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Kaufman et al. Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. disclose the claimed invention as set forth above regarding claim 22 and Murahashi et al. further disclose "designating the first printer as the master; and designating the second printer as the slave (col 2 ln 30-35 and col 4 ln 40-45)." Thus, Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. meet the claimed invention except "wherein the first printer is a printer and the second printer is one of an input module and finishing module."

19. Kaufman et al. disclose "wherein the first printer is a printer (26 of Fig 2) and the second printer is one of an input module and finishing module (24 of Fig 2)." It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to provide a printer as the first printer and an input module or finishing module as the second printer. One would have been motivated to so modify Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. for the benefit of having a printer system with a master/slave relationship in which the second printer leverages the quality and durability of thermal transfer printing when printing machine readable "stamps", while the first printer leverages the print quality and reliability of ink jet printing using scanning ink jet printheads, as stated by Kaufman et al. in column 2, lines 44-50.

20. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Oyumi. Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. disclose the claimed invention as set forth above regarding claim 22. Thus Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. meet the

claimed invention except "sending a printer capability listing from the printer designated the slave to the printer designated the master."

21. Oyumi teaches "sending a printer capability listing from the printer designated the slave to the printer designated the master (Par [0106] and S1504 of Fig 14A)." It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to provide the capabilities of the slave printer to the master printer. One would have been motivated to so modify Isobe et al. in view of Murahashi et al. for the benefit of being able to select the printer suitable for the contents of each print job, as stated by Oyumi in paragraph [0109].

Allowable Subject Matter

22. Claims 23-25 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: Prior art does not disclose or suggest the claimed "calculating a first value representing a summation of the first printer's attributes for acting as the master; calculating a second value representing a summation of the second printer's attributes for acting as the master" in combination with the remaining claim elements as set forth in claim 23.

23. Claims 24 and 25 are allowable due to being dependent upon allowable claim 23. However, the prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to claim 25. Thompson discloses "determining which will be a master [by]...generating a

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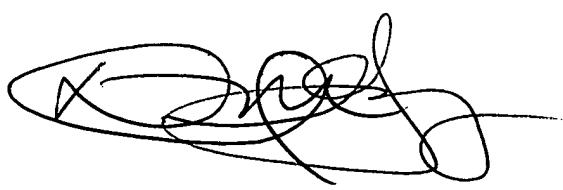
first random number...generating a second random number...comparing the first random number to the second random number (col 2 ln 31-37)."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian Goldberg whose telephone number is 571-272-2728. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 9AM-5PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Gray can be reached on 571-272-2119. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

BJG



DAVID M. GRAY
PRIMARY EXAMINER